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THOUGHTS
ON THE
FATAL CONSEQUENCES
OF
Female Prostitution;

TOGETHER WITH THE
OUTLINES OF A PLAN
PROPOSED TO CHECK THOSE ENORMOUS EVILS.

HUMBLY ADDRESSED TO THE CONSIDERATION
OF THE NOBILITY AND GENTRY IN GENERAL.

By THOMAS SCOTT, Morning Preacher at the
LOCK CHAPEL, and Attendant on the Patients
in the Hospital.

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T H O U G H T S

FATAL CONSEQUENCES

Female Pollution;

TOGETHER WITH THE

OUTLINES OF A PRACTICAL

PROPOSAL TO CHECK THE INCREASED RATES

RECENTLY ADDRESSED TO THE COMMISSIONERS
OF THE NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN RAILWAYS

By THOMAS SCOTT, Member of the
Lock Chapter, and a Fellow of the British
Institution.

L O N D O N.

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T H O U G H T S

ON THE

FATAL CONSEQUENCES

OF

Female Prostitution, &c.

IT is generally allowed, that none of the human Species are more miserable in themselves, or more mischievous in Society, than those unhappy Women, who disgrace our Streets, and subsist upon the infamous Wages of Iniquity. Their Occupation, Connections, and the Scenes, which they perpetually witness, speedily obliterate every Sentiment of Virtue, that they may have received from Education, and familiarize them to Wickedness; until Shame and Remorse being completely banished, they are in the daily Practice of Effrontery, Deceit, and Licentiousness, prepared for any kind or Degree of Vice, to which they can be tempted.

Young Women, having been seduced, and deserted, are banished from their Friends; excluded from their former Prospects and Satisfaction; and frequently, after an indulgent Education, are left without other Resource, than that of entering the vile Recesses of Debauchery. When once initiated in these Seminaries, the general Consequences are increasing Wickedness, a ruined Constitution, a premature Death, and, as far as we can see, everlasting Destruction.

In the mean Time their malignant Influence on Society is equally deplorable. They throng our Streets and lay in wait for the inexperienced and incautious: So that a Youth can scarce walk a Mile in many Parts of this City, without, running the Gauntlet through at least fifty of those Temptations, which are most likely to prevail against him. Thus are the rising Generations successively corrupted; evil Habits are early contracted, ruinous Connections formed, Conscience and the Sense of Shame subdued, and our Youth trained up for a Life of Profligacy. Here especially they learn Extravagance; and hence sallies forth to assault our Persons and Habitations, in order to make those depredations on our Property, which may support the Expenses of their licentious Indulgences: And many of those unhappy Wretches, (whose Executions are the Disgrace of our Age and Country, and the Grief of every feeling Heart) confess that in the Company of Harlots, they were trained up for this fatal End.

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When further we consider the Influence, these unhappy Women have upon our Population, and the Health of the People; upon relative Life, especially the Conduct of Children to their Parents, and Husbands to their Wives, with all the long Train of domestic Miseries that ensue: And when we consider that commonly the very seducers of virtuous young Women, (whose Conduct is so generally, and justly execrated, are trained up for such Seductions in the Company of those, who are licentious: We may then without Exaggeration assert, that a common Prostitute is in a Community, an Evil, not dissimilar to a Person infected with the Plague; who miserable himself, is daily communicating the Contagion to those, who will in turn infect others, and propagate still wider and wider the fatal Malady.——

There is therefore scarce a Motive, that can influence the feeling Heart, which doth not powerfully urge us to attempt something, in order to remedy, or at least check the Progress of this enormous Evil. Compassion for the poor Wretches themselves; the Desire both of their temporal and eternal Welfare; Love to Society, to our Connections and Relatives; together with Regard to the Interests of Religion, and Morality, with united Energy constrain us, to wish something effectual could be done.——

But the Mischief is so deep rooted, and wide diffused, that a radical Cure may perhaps be in it's own Nature impracticable: However nothing more than a partial Redress can be expected from any single Expedient, or private Society.

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But in such a Case, no Degree of Success should be despised, nor any Expedient slighted, which reasonably promises it: On the contrary it behoves every one, whose Situation, Ability, or Influence enable him, to devise, propose and apply some Remedy, whether of a more public, or a more private Nature; for a Multiplicity of Expedients, except they interfere with each other, will not be found too many; and each may have it's peculiar Usefulness.—

These Observations regularly introduce the Design of this Pamphlet. It has pleased God in his wise, and righteous Providence, to chastise this Species of Vice by a very loathsome, and dreadful Disease; which yet admits of a ready and effectual Cure, when properly treated; but being neglected, produces the most fatal Effects. Now both the divine Precepts and Example instruct us, to attempt the Relief even of those very Miseries, which are the immediate Effects of Sin. At a Time therefore when Persons, labouring under this dreadful Malady, were inadmissible into other Hospitals; and consequently when Numbers, through Poverty, were incapable of obtaining effectual Relief; Compassion for the Miserable induced many of the Nobility, and Gentry to found and Support by Subscription the Lock Hospital, purposely for their Reception and Cure. Aware of the Objections which might be urged against, and the Abuse that might be made of such an Institution, many salutary Arrangements were made to obviate such Objections, and prevent such Abuses; (as may be seen in the annual Reports and other
Papers

Papers circulated by the Governors.) Especially, one Part of the Plan hath ever been, to convert the Hospital into a Sort of Penitentiary; and whilst the Patients were under Cure, and feeling in the most sensible Manner the bitter Effects of Vice, that they should be attended by a Minister of the Establishment, and instructed from the Word of God in such Things, as were directly suited to their Character and Situation: such as have a Tendency to convince them of their Wickedness, of the Displeasure of God against them on that Account, and of their being exposed to an unspeakably severer Punishment hereafter; unless they repent of, and forsake their Sins, seeking for that Forgiveness and Salvation, proposed by the Gospel.—

It is not easy to ascertain the Success of these Endeavours; as Persons, to whom we are utter Strangers, after six Weeks, or two Months continuance in the Hospital, are dismissed to all Parts of the Kingdom, and we see them no more. But as the Instructions are given them privately in their Wards, in the plainest, and most familiar Style, and upon the most interesting, and uncontroverted Subjects; and accompanied with earnest Exhortations, Warnings, and Persuasions, as well as Supplications to God for them, we may reasonably hope for the divine Blessing on our Endeavours; for we are assured by the best Authority, that Publicans and Harlots are brought to true Repentance, and do find Admission into the Kingdom of God. And indeed their general Attention, and the Seriousness observable among them, and the grateful Acknowledg-

knowledgments several make, and the Hope they express that they have received real and durable Advantage, are sufficient Encouragements to proceed. Nor should it be forgotten that serious Impressions, when not immediately effectual, nay after having lain dormant for many Years, do not unrequently at last spring up and produce the happiest Effects.——

In full Confidence that these Endeavours will by no means be in vain, I should have proceeded in the Discharge of the Duty of my Situation, without seeking to attract the Notice of any one, or asking any human Assistance; were there not one discouraging Circumstance, which I am incapable of removing, but which may be removed by the united Efforts of others. —

It is, I suppose, generally known, that the Patients in the Lock Hospital, are both Male and Female, in separate Wards: But their Cases are widely different. The Men have their Places of Abode, or their Occupations, to which they may return when cured: And as Wickedness (in that particular at least) is not their maintenance; should any serious Reflections be excited in their Minds, they would in general meet with no other Obstacles to a Change of Life, than such as are common to them with others, who have contracted vicious Habits. However, all that is properly in our Power, or can be expected from us, hath been done in Order to their Reformation.

But the *most* of the Women are of that Class, whose Misery and baleful Influence have been hinted at. Many of them, when discharged, have

have no Method of subsistence, but by Prostitution; nor can procure any Lodging but in an House of Infamy. These have scarce any alternative, but starving or a Prison on the one Hand, or returning to their former Practices on the other. Should therefore any serious Impressions be made upon them, they would need the Faith and Constancy of a Martyr, (in steadily preferring the greatest Hardships, to a ready relief by Sin) in the very first Onset of a Reformation.——

It is indeed with sensible Pleasure that I observe, that some few have been fetched out of the Hospital by their Relations, upon Application made to them; and I have Reason to believe that some others have been induced to return Home, and have been received. But there have been Parents, who have positively refused to harbour their own Children upon repeated Application. Others have no Relations, who are in circumstances to relieve them: And doubtless some would gladly enter an Asylum among strangers, who would recoil at the Idea of appearing, emaciated by Disease, and covered with Infamy, amongst the Companions of more creditable and prosperous Days.—And though the lamentable Truth be allowed, that few in comparison seem disposed to forsake their licentious Practices except they could otherwise lead a Life of Indolence, and Indulgence; yet we must deny the Gospel to be any longer “the Power of God unto Salvation,” if we conclude that none will ever be influenced by it, to a sincere Desire and Purpose of forsak-

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ing their former sinful Courses and Connections, should a place be prepared and opened for their Reception.

By this Time I suppose the Reader will have turned his Thoughts to the Magdalene Hospital. Far be it from me to depreciate the Excellency and Utility of that truly benevolent Institution, which is, I believe, always opened to such Persons, as from the Lock properly apply for Admission. But there are Reasons, why it cannot answer the End *here* proposed, or supersede the Necessity of such a private Aylum, as I would recommend; I shall mention but one, which is of such a Nature, as renders it needless to assign any other. The Magdalene admits Persons only once a Month: Patients are discharged from the Lock every Week. During the intermediate Space, (whether one Week or three) which the most would have to wait previous to admission into the Magdalene, they must, and will *generally* return to their former Abodes, Connections, and Practices: when this is the Case, Reflection will studiously be stifled by every Dissipation and Excess, and before the Time is expired, every serious Impression will be effaced. In order to do them real good, they must, if possible, be preserved from ever seeing or conversing with their former abandoned Companions: An immediate Asylum alone can promise Success; together with the continuation of those Instructions, which have excited any Seriousness in their Minds, or Remorse in their Consciences; that Time may not be allowed for such Impressions to wear off; but

but that they may have all the Advantage we can give them, for producing an abiding change. It is therefore hoped, that none will suppose that such a design can interfere with the Magdalene, which will doubtless continue to receive the firm Support of the Humane, and will never want as many Objects, as it can provide for.* And all impartial Friends to the Cause of Humanity will unite in wishing the Increase of such Institutions, as far, as they can answer the End proposed, and conduce to the real Benefit of our fellow-creatures.—

It is true, on the other Hand, that if the Almighty is pleased to exert his Power, he can effect the Sinner's Conversion, notwithstanding all Hindrances; and on that Power our Dependance must ultimately be placed. With this Truth I have hitherto been supported, and born above discouragement; and shall, I trust, continue to be so, should this Attempt be unsuccessful: Because then I should have done all *in my Power* for them. But, until we have done all *in our Power*, we presume upon, rather than trust in the Power of God, if we expect Success from him. We are to use every Means; and remove, as much as possible, every Hindrance, which can prevent the Efficacy of those Means; and then expect a Blessing from God upon our Endeavours; in just the same Manner, when we are seeking the Salvation of their Souls, as when
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* It may, and will frequently happen, that Persons applying to the Magdalene though not refused, may be postponed through want of Room for present Accommodation: which in this Case, must be equivalent to a Repulse.

we would cure their bodily Distemper: And something further may be done in the former Concern; At least I suppose so.—

Now let a reflecting Person consider the Situation of a destitute Female in the Lock Hospital.—From a full Persuasion that when discharged, she must either return to her former sinful Course of Life, (which for the present Moment is not without its Attractions to a sensual, vain, and dissipated Mind,) or encounter the extremest Hardships; she must needs be exposed to almost invincible Temptations to hate and shun Instruction, to stop her Ears, and harden her Heart against it; and to strive to forget, or discredit the alarming Truths, which only tend to render her uneasy, in that Course of Life, which appears to her inevitable.—

But could we inform them, that an Asylum was prepared, into which any who would prefer honest Employment, decent Maintenance, and a regular Life, might immediately be admitted, upon their Cure; and in which they might be continued (if they behaved properly) 'till they could recover their Character, and be introduced into some creditable Way of Life: We might hope this would remove that Obstacle, soften their Prejudices, convince them of our friendly Disposition towards them, preserve them from self-Desperation, and produce a more candid Mind in receiving Instruction. And should hopeful Tokens of Repentance appear in any of them, they would not have the Mortification of being told upon Application to the Minister, (after all the professed Desire of their Welfare, which

which he hath intermingled with his Exhortations) that nothing further can be done for them, let what will be the Consequence: As I have several Times, with regret, been constrained to inform them.—

Such an Assylum would likewise furnish abundance of additional Arguments and Motives of the most convincing and affecting Nature, whereby to expostulate with them. Every Person would then be satisfied, that all in the Power of Man was done for them: Every Shadow of Objection against the Lock Charity must effectually be silenced, and it must be universally acknowledged to be both a well intended, and well directed Attempt to check the Progress and counteract the Consequences of Licentiousness; and to rescue some of the most wretched of our fellow-creatures from complicated Misery and Ruin: And I trust it may be added, that it would form an additional Ground, on which we might rest our Expectation both of Support from Men, and a Blessing from God upon the Institution.

This is the Design which the Author, at first rather from the Feelings of his Heart, in witnessing the Misery of the Objects of his Instruction, conceived as a Wish; than formed into a Plan, which he could expect should be carried into Execution at the Instance of so obscure an Individual. But having mentioned the Thought to several respectable Persons, he is encouraged by their Approbation and countenance, to propose it thus publicly to the humane, the generous, and the pious; to all who are
glad

glad to promote the Interests of Mankind, by promoting Religion, and Morality.

No more than the Outlines of the Plan need here be mentioned, which are as follows. It is proposed to raise a Sum of Money by Subscription, and with it to provide a Place contiguous to the Lock, into which any of the Female Patients, who have behaved well in the Hospital, and have not (for the latter Part of the Time at least) been guilty of indecent, and profane Conversation, but who seem hopefully disposed to change their Course of Life, may be admitted; and there maintained, though without Indulgence, yet at a Distance from any Severity, or Hardship (which in this Case would be peculiarly impolitic.) There to be employed in some kind of Work, according to their Ability, a certain Number of Hours every Day: To be continued here until application can be made to their Friends to receive them, or some proper Situation can be found for them: But liable to be expelled for ill Behaviour (such as Lying, Dishonesty, profane and indecent Language, being seen in improper Company, being absent from the House without Leave, or contrary to rule, resorting to improper Places, Slothfulness, &c.) That they attend regularly the public Worship at the Lock-Chapel, and also be instructed by the Minister, in the same Manner as the Patients in the Hospital are.

I am aware that the Ingratitude, and ill Behaviour, which some have witnessed in attempting the Reformation of such Women, will discourage them: And I have armed my own
Mind,

Mind, and would arm the Minds of others to expect multiplied Instances of this kind. But if amidst reiterated Disappointments, we are successful only in a few Instances, and but a very small Number are indeed brought to true Repentance, and a Christian Conversation: The Honour done the Gospel, the Benefit accruing to Society, the comfort and advantage afforded to an afflicted Family, added to the Salvation of an immortal Soul, in every such Instance, will be an abundant Compensation. And, if we consider that some of these poor Creatures are not above Thirteen, or Fourteen Years of Age; and that others are but just entered upon this abandoned course of Life, and directly feel the painful Effects; I shall scarce be deemed too sanguine, if I express a strong Confidence, that we shall have at least thus much Success, if the Plan be adopted. But after all the Pains bestowed upon them, to be under the necessity of turning them, however reluctant, into the Streets, is a discouragement of such Magnitude, that there needs to Eloquence to evince, that the removal of it is a proper Object of Charity: Whilst the readiness of the Public on other Occasions, inspires a Confidence that it will be removed.

And probably the Expence will not be large: The Number of those, who will durably prefer such a Life may never be great. But if God should beyond expectation, prosper the Attempt, the Expence will then be more easily provided for. However it is proposed to begin upon a small Scale, in order to make Trial how it answers, before any large Expence
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be incurred. And it should also be observed, that tho' it is intended, in order to encourage their Industry, that a portion of their Earnings should be at their own disposal; yet the remainder will in part defray the Charge.

N. B. It is proposed to be a Subscription entirely separate from that to the Lock Hospital. Many Subscribers to that Charity, may not chuse to support this design by any additional Subscription: And 'tis hoped that many, who do not chuse to become Governors of the Lock, will subscribe a smaller Sum to this Design.

It is also proposed to confine this Asylum entirely to the Patients cured in the Lock-Hospital, that it may more evidently appear in no respect to interfere with the Magdalene.

On Wednesday, April the 18th, at Twelve o'Clock in the Forenoon will be held at the Board Room, at the Lock Hospital, a Meeting of such of the Nobility, and Gentry, who wish to forward this Design: When the further Particulars of the Plan will be laid before such as favor us with their presence.

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